

Executive Message

Metro North Health



Summary:

- Improving care through innovation
- Health Equity update
- Congratulations Perry Judd
- Final message from Acting Chief Allied Health Practitioner
- Metro North Innovation Showcase - HELIX Shark Tank EOI open.

[Message feedback](#)

Chief Executive Nick Steele



Audience: All staff



Read time: 5+ min



For: Action

Hi Everyone,

As I continue to familiarise myself with the services and operations of Metro North, I am constantly impressed by the commitment of staff across the health service to providing the best possible care to our patients. As Australia's largest health service, we are privileged to be able to provide an extensive variety of specialised services that allows patients with a diverse range of general and complex health conditions to be treated.



This was highlighted during my visit to RBWH's Intensive Care Unit this week accompanied by Executive Director Louise Oriti, Director ICU Shane Townsend, and A/Executive Director Critical Care Kristy Underwood. During the visit, I had the opportunity to speak with staff about their work and the challenges they face in caring for some of our most critically-ill patients. I also observed ECMO (Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation) technology in action, a high-end medical device used to provide temporary life support when a patient's lungs or heart are severely failing, allowing their organs to recover.

Thanks to the ICU team for accommodating the visit; it's always great to spend time with our frontline teams, learning more about the tremendous work we do across the health service caring for our patients.

Improving care through innovation

As we start to define our ambitious agenda as part of *Future Metro North: Reimagining healthcare*, we are also hearing what must be undertaken in the next 18 months to respond to our challenges today. A big focus is looking at how we can do things differently. As I've mentioned previously, Metro North is experiencing greater demands on our services each year. These demands will only increase, so we are in a position where we need to look at innovative ways of delivering care, especially outside of the traditional hospital environment to ensure that patients can receive the right care, in the right place, at the right time.



Making care more accessible for patients and simplifying processes for them to navigate our health system are essential in meeting the needs of our community and ensuring we can provide sustainable care moving forward.

I'd like to highlight two key initiatives that are actively underway.

Outpatients redesign

The Healthcare Excellence and Innovation team are actively working with clinical teams across Metro North to redesign outpatient care to reduce the number of patients waiting outside the clinically recommended timeframes. I will be attending a workshop on Monday to consider practical solutions to achieve this and support sustainability of subsequent service delivery.

Growing out of hospital care

In line with the Metro North Health Service Plan principles, Metro North will be growing our out of hospital care service offerings across the health service, to provide safe, high-quality hospital comparable care in patients' own homes (or alternative patient preferred location and/or a safe location) including access to allied health and care for

paediatric, elderly, and mental health patients with appropriate models of care. I am looking to achieve a target of 15 per cent across Metro North over the next 15 years. Community and Oral Health Directorate are leading a workshop next Thursday 2 April to advance this work which I look forward to participating in.

I will update you on the outcomes of these important workshops in my upcoming messages.

Health Equity update

Building a culturally diverse workforce is essential in fostering a strong team that can support the delivery of culturally safe and respectful care to our patients. The Deadly Start program, established by Metro North in 2019 and now statewide, is designed to create meaningful employment pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students by supporting them to gain nationally recognised qualifications and hands-on experience in healthcare while still at school. It aims to strengthen the future Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce and build long-term connections between students, their communities, and Queensland Health.

During the past week, members of the Deadly Start program team have been in Mackay working alongside local staff, connecting with cadets and trainees. This highlights the commitment of our Metro North team to local engagement and continuing to build partnerships which have supported the successful rollout of the program across all 16 Hospital and Health Services across Queensland.

I am pleased to share that for the 2026 intake to this program, Metro North has enrolled 34 trainees and 12 cadets.



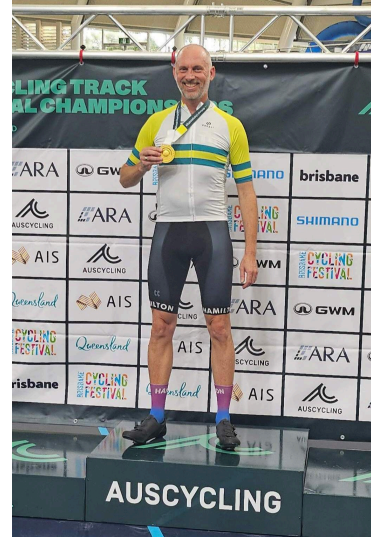
(l to r): Sami Doyle – Cadet; Cassandra Kellaway – Training Pathway Coordinator Central QLD region; and Sheringa Minniecon - Principal Project Officer, Deadly Start and First Nations Cadetship Programs

Congratulations Perry Judd

Congratulations to Acting Chief Allied Health Practitioner Perry Judd who competed in the National Championships for Track Cycling at the Anna Meares Velodrome this week, winning a gold medal in the Individual Pursuit event, Para-Transplant category. As a bone marrow transplant recipient, Perry competes at the national level with other para-athletes

and uses this opportunity to promote the benefits of sport and exercise to all transplant recipients. He is also chair of Transplant Australia Queensland. It's great we have one of our own senior leaders advocating for the important work of our transplant units at TPCH and RBWH which have given many people a second chance at life.

Perry concluded in the role of Acting CAHP yesterday and will return to his substantive role as Director Allied Health TPCH from Monday. We thank Perry for his leadership and support over the last eight months.



Executive leave arrangements

Chief Operating Officer (COO) Stephen Eaton will be taking a period of planned leave from Monday 30 March 2026 until Monday 6 April inclusive. During this time, Dr Elizabeth Rushbrook will cover the COO role and have the associated delegations.

Finally, as next Friday is Good Friday, there will be no Executive message but we'll resume on the following Friday 10 April.

Take care.
Nick



11.30am-12.30pm Thursday 2 April

Lecture Room 4, Education Centre

[Ask a question](#)

Acting Chief Allied Health Practitioner

Perry Judd



Audience: All staff



Read time: 2 min



For: Information

Dear colleagues,

This week I am handing over the reins of the Chief Allied Health Practitioner role to the new permanent incumbent Michelle Stute, as I transition back to my substantive role as Director of Allied Health at TPCH.

The handover process has allowed me to reflect on the many achievements and positive impact that the MN Allied Health office has delivered over the 10 months that I have been acting in the role.

Below are some notable examples of activities led by the dedicated and passionate teams based in the Metro North Allied Health office:

- Co-delivering the successful Metro North/Metro South Allied Health Research Symposium
- Integrating the Queensland Civil Administration Tribunal Guardianship and Hospital Hearings Program into MN Allied Health governance and continuing to reduce the time from application to hearing.
- Continuing to grow the number and completion rates of our Deadly Start and Cadetship programs and supporting an increasing number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to achieve employment in Metro North upon graduation.
- Progressing the important delivery of the Disability Services Action Plan and becoming the executive sponsor for MN ENABLE.
- Providing funding support for numerous Allied Health led research and translation projects through Allied Health grant programs, resulting in improved clinical practice and positive patient outcomes.
- Finalising the implementation of the upgraded Metro North wide Patient Meal Management System, enabling Food Services to optimise menu management and provide on-demand ordering at some sites.
- Delivering the *Strengthening Child Protection Services Across Metro North* report and recommendations, leading to significant opportunities for enhancing the critical work of our Child Protection Units.
- Leading the trial of digital solutions such as mobile translation devices, and ambient AI scribe software.
- Piloting innovative workforce models of care such as Aged Care Placement Assistant roles to support timely access to residential aged care beds for older patients experiencing delayed discharge.

Allied Health plays a key role in almost all aspects of the healthcare journey. I'm proud of the work that our Allied Health clinicians, leaders, researchers, educators, and support staff do in Metro North to continually improve the way we deliver care and innovate new solutions to the growing challenges faced by the healthcare system.

I am confident that we have the right ingredients to rise to these challenges and continue to deliver world-class healthcare when we work together across professions, streams and directorates.

I want to thank the Metro North Allied Health office, as well as the Senior Executive and Operational Leadership teams for their valued support and collaborative approach. Please join me in welcoming Michelle as our new Metro North Chief Allied Health Practitioner.

Regards,
Perry

Acting Executive Director, Clinical Services

Dr Jason Jenkins



Audience: All staff



For: Information

Innovation Showcase - The HELIX Shark Tank - EOI Open!

The **Metro North Innovation Showcase** will feature a new segment this year: **The HELIX Shark Tank**.

This gives frontline teams the opportunity to present their ideas directly to senior and executive leaders (Sharks) in a **three-minute pitch**.

Our Sharks will not act as judges; they will actively back ideas they see potential in, offering practical support such as executive sponsorship, mentoring, or access to governance pathways.

The intent is to create a clear and direct link between ideas and decision-makers, with participants leaving the session with a named supporter, mentor, connection or a defined next step.

The expression of interest opens today: [MN Innovation Showcase - HELIX Shark Tank Expression of Interest](#)

Information about the MN Innovation Showcase is available on the [showcase QHEPS page](#).

If you are not a member of the HELIX Hub Community, or for more information, please email HELIXHub@health.qld.gov.au

Regards,
Jason



If you have received this email and do not work for Metro North please follow this link to be removed from the mailing list.

[Email us](#)